

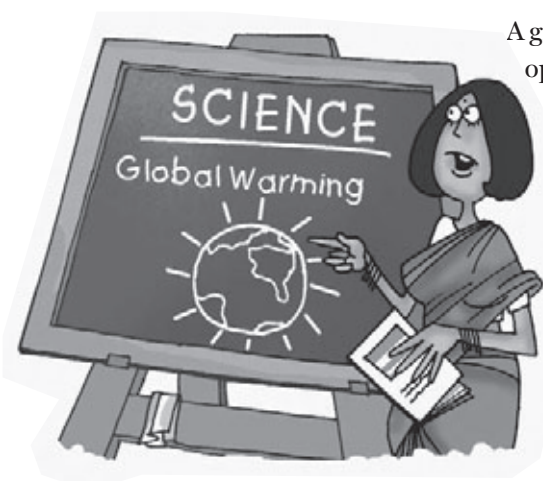


What is the Green Schools Programme?

The field of environment education is dogged by a very fundamental contradiction. While everyone, everywhere, asserts the importance of ‘learning to live sustainably’, environment remains a peripheral issue in our formal schooling system. It continues to be viewed more as an extracurricular activity rather than as a subject which should be holding a priority position in the national curriculum. Fortunately, it has not deterred many talented, creative and farsighted educators from experimenting and evolving extremely innovative teaching methods, materials and practices.

The novelty of CSE’s Green Schools Programme (GSP) lies in the fact that it moves beyond theories and textbooks and concentrates solely on ‘doing’. It is an environmental education programme directed towards subtly sensitising students to the environment through hands-on and thought-provoking activities. It is also an environment management system that audits, through students, the consumption of natural resources within school campuses and helps schools become good environmental managers by deploying pragmatic solutions to reduce wastage of precious resources.

WHAT IS A GREEN SCHOOL?



A green school is a resource-efficient building—one that uses little water, optimises energy efficiency, minimises waste-generation, catches and recycles water and provides healthier space for its occupants—as compared to a conventional building.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ADOPT THE GREEN SCHOOLS PROGRAMME?

Adopting the programme does not mean that the most complex technological and scientific problems that our planet faces today will be fixed instantly. It is too big a task. But it will

- spur the growth of a more environmentally aware and responsible generation of citizens;
- equip resourceful teachers to foster environmental literacy;
- help every member of the school community understand the scope and significance of his or her role in the sustainable use of natural resources within the school campus;
- nudge everyone to get on with the job.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF AUDITING?

- GSP helps us move beyond words, jargons and intentions to practices that are sustainable. It benchmarks a school's performance as an environmental manager. The audit measures impact and motivates participants to work towards change.
- The monitoring process is participatory and transparent. It encourages teachers to convert audit tasks into assignments for students. The initiative-based tasks also test students' skills of communication and analysis.
- It helps schools record their available resources and trains students to collect information systematically to feed and ease up the analysis process.
- The analysis of post-audit information can be used by a network of schools or by city or state governments to do a comparative evaluation so that best practices can be shared.
- The audit equips school managements to skillfully manage their available resources for optimum utilisation and become Green Schools.



WHAT ARE THE EXPECTED OUTCOMES OF THE PROGRAMME?

- GSP will empower students to use natural resources in a responsible and efficient manner and practice effective and sustainable methods that will become a way of life.
- It will generate and provide credible data for Central and state governments for long-term policy change in school infrastructure/curriculum to help schools deal with dwindling resources and become resource-efficient.
- It will lead to proper governance as all schools become Green Schools over a period of time— i.e. schools that use little water, optimise energy efficiency, minimise waste generation, catch and recycle water and provide a healthier space for their students as compared to a conventional building.



WHAT ARE THE KEY ELEMENTS OF GSP FOR 2016?

Solid Waste Management was the focus area for the GSP Audit in 2015-16; **Water and Sanitation** will be the focus area in 2016-17. Water is one of the most stressed resources on our planet. Severe pollution of surface water sources (rivers, lakes and wells), depletion and contamination of groundwater, recurring droughts, large-scale mismanagement of water and wastewater – all these have combined to lead to a situation where experts have begun warning of imminent 'wars over water'.



Schools and their students can lead from the front in turning the tide. We want students to discover the forgotten practice of **rainwater harvesting** and learn to **conserve water** responsibly.

This supplement to our How Green Is Your School? manual concentrates, therefore, on the subject of water and sanitation. There are three important sections in this supplement: The first

is the water and sanitation audit, the second helps teachers to introduce water and sanitation to the audit teams and serves as a classroom teaching resource, and the third section assists teachers/audit coordinators to design and conduct project work around water and sanitation.

The GSP environmental audit is now available online. Schools have to submit the data online using their computers, tablets or smart phones as the audit portal is system-responsive. Submitting the data online will make the exercise easier for schools and, more importantly, save paper! The online version also have features to upload photographs, certificates and other supporting documentation to demonstrate the school's environmental performance.

GSP has an analytics platform to track the environmental performance of schools. With the data that is collected, we will shift from counting inputs and outputs to helping schools measure sustainable impact over a period of five years. The data-driven indicators will help participating schools track the environmental value of their work and understand their own impact within and outside their school premises. The environmental dashboard will provide schools the baseline to quantify their year-by-year environmental accomplishments with a richer, story-driven measure of impact. If schools fall short of the standards, they will be guided to improve their environmental footprints. After all, Rome wasn't built in a day!

With the GSP Audit now available online, analytics will:

- help compare the performance of schools in various districts and states, as well as measure the overall performance of schools in India;
- help schools plug existing gaps to minimise the use of natural resources;
- help get accurate data;
- have every school participate in the audit over the next five years and help them become Green Schools by Mahatma Gandhi's 150th birth anniversary in 2019.

The GSP rating will be valid for three years.